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VIETNAM CRIMES DISCLOSURE ACT
DATE 2007

Subject: Press Conference of TARSIS Valeriy in Rome Italy.

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Date: 21 April 1968

1. The press conference of Tarsis, Valeriy took place on the 27 April 1967 in the Teatro Nazionale in Rome Italy. It was sponsored by the Italian Cultural Society and by the publisher Rizzoli. At the conference people holding invitations were admitted, Source, although having no invitation was admitted as a member of the press. The conference opened with Tarsis reading (in Italian) a short speech on the topic of "Russian Writers today". Afterwards he replied to questions from the floor.
2. Experience showed Tarsis that as a writer he was always involved with the police, nevertheless, the brutality of the regime cannot kill a person's creative talents. During his interrogation by a SUVANOV (?) fmu Tarsis was told, after saying that he only wrote the truth about life in the USSR, that "for our party the truth is not important, it does not help us in achieving communism". Tarsis then stated that for him, a writer is a person who writes only the truth. Socialist Realism according to Subject is neither Socialist, nor Realism, only literary dictatorship. In the USSR a person who refuses to kneel before the leadership is liquidated. Statements that there are no more concentration camps are outright lies. Tarsis told police: " You say there are no concentration camps in the USSR, then where will you send me?"
3. Tarsis went on to say that in the Writers Union of the USSR there are 6,000 members. Tarsis organized a Union of anti-regime writers numbering 400 members called SMOG (which stands for Courage, Thought, Image and Dignity). There are members of SMOG in thirty different cities of the USSR among them Kiga. Recently the members of SMOG published a manifest which begins "Great Russian nation..." The free world helps these writers by publishing the journals "Peniks", "Avangard" and "Sphinks" in West Germany. The regime combats these writers by sending them to insane asylums. Many members of SMOG are children of high party officials, who have broken ties with their parents.

4. In reply to a question about the present situation in Russia Tarsis said: The people who are active politically, and certain circles such as students and journalists are not afraid to oppose the government. This opposition began with Pasternack. Today the regime is weak, and all that is left is to wait on its downfall. Although the opposition is small in membership, it is comprised of highly talented people. According to Tarsis the opposition has been active since April 1955. Intellectuals and intellectuals started a demonstration in Moscow where there were present 450 people. They marched to the monument of Mayakovsky and shouted "Away with the proselytism of Socialist Realism". The police broke up the demonstration and arrested 17 persons. A trial was held within 3 days, and the arrested were sentenced for 10 days "re-education", the charge being "obstruction of movement". Such actions just show the weakness of the regime, according to Tarsis. Active in the opposition are also army officers.

5. In reply to a question by Dr. Markus about the role of non-Russian peoples in anti-Soviet actions. Tarsis said that the opposition in the Union Republics was even greater than in Russia itself. He gave an example which he heard from his sister in TIFLIS. Last year on May day there was a demonstration where people threw stones at portraits of Party leaders for two hours. While two years ago there was a real uprising in Tiflis. In Ukraine, the Ukrainians have their own organizations.

6. Within the party there are two separate groups. One is led by Sholepin and Suslov, the other by Kosigin and Mazurov. The sympathies of the army is unknown. Tarsis does not discount the possibility of a civil war in the near future. When asked by deputy Pacciardi why he was allowed to leave the USSR, Tarsis replied that the government was anxious to get rid of him, since many young people were followers of his. The leadership of the party was divided in how to act towards him. Sholepin and his followers wanted Tarsis out, while Kosigin's group was against this method, saying that it was shameful. Also on Tarsis' side was the British ambassador. The final decision was reached to permit Tarsis to travel, and the time was made to

coming with the trial of SINYAVSKY and DANIEL, so as to sooth public opinion in the West.

7. Russian youth believe in God, and even take an interest in the ecumenical movement. He (Tarsis) is presently writing a book about Christianity and about to have a Papal audience. The present situation of the church in Russia is very difficult. High church posts are held by members of the KGB, thus showing that in reality the church is not free, as it is made and broken by the state. Recent priests are arrested and deported, as recently happened to a father KOMKOV from Moscow who was sent to Siberia. Because of the KGB, Communism is not strong enough to solve social problems. In conversations with young Russian writers, the only alternative offered to communism was religion. In a true democracy people should base their relations on the saying "man should love his fellow man".

8. Other statements made by Tarsis at conference:

"The Communist regime is nothing other than socialist fascism"

"Inhuman, and anti-human is the basis of communism".

"SINYAVSKY and DANIEL rejected the charges put before them"

"Foreign criticism on the part of public opinion in the West angers the Soviet leaders".

"So-called 'Liberals' as GUARDOVSKY and others have already made their peace with the regime, and become used lived work and idle workers"

"It was I, who brought up these young poets"

"With the help of the Free World, the Russian people will gain their freedom".

"Communism is basically a false teaching," in discussion with young people, Tarsis always remarked: "Philosophy is the love of truth, while communism is the love of idiocy"

In reply to a question if the USSR will prolong its policy of co-existence with the West, Tarsis said that policy changes from day to day. Once there is some freedom, then arrests take place. The people know what they are slaves, and want to depose of the regime.

4.

"I am not for the Stalinist system. I remember 120 years ago that there was a resolution to decide to erase the wrongs committed by the communist revolutionaries."

"In Moscow there were long lines of people waiting to buy sardines, a party official came and told them 'citizens, although we have no sardines, we have a big production'."

"In Moscow all students in the USSR can read works of non-Marxist philosophers, which make no, or a that many students want to buy more to borrow books and read much."

"Other communist newspapers are allowed into the USSR. Books of Western authors are 'misunderstood grossly'. Farissi remembers that one work which he translated had 120 falsified pages."

"I asked him if the wider masses wanted a democratic system, Farissi said that in secret conversations the matter of a new constitution, a new government, wider democracy, autonomy for every nation in a federation was discussed."

"He said he failed to act because otherwise it was not successful. Farissi said he however told Source that he will soon travel to the USA for a period of conference, return to Italy and live there permanently."